



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Virginia Employment Commission

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Virginia's Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate Held Steady in December at 2.6 Percent

— Seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment was up 5,200 jobs
between November 2019 and December 2019—

RICHMOND— Virginia's **seasonally adjusted** unemployment rate remained unchanged in December at 2.6 percent, which is 0.2 percentage point below the rate from a year ago. According to household survey data in December, the labor force expanded for the eighteenth consecutive month by 14,058, or 0.3 percent to set a new record high of 4,454,888, as the number of unemployed residents rose by 324. The number of employed residents increased by 13,734 to set a new high of 4,338,521. Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national rate, which was unchanged at 3.5 percent.

Virginia nonagricultural wage and salary employment, from the monthly establishment survey, increased by 5,200 jobs in December to 4,053,800. November's preliminary estimates were revised downward 700, subtracting slightly from that month's positive job growth. In December, private sector employment increased by 6,100 jobs to 3,335,200, while public sector payrolls decreased by 900 jobs to 718,600.

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From November 2019 to December 2019, **seasonally adjusted** employment increased in six major industry divisions, was unchanged in one, and decreased in four. The largest job gain during December occurred in **private education and health services** with a gain of 2,900 jobs to 560,200. Other employment gains included **finance** (1,500 jobs) to 212,500, **professional and business services** (1,500 jobs) to 760,500, and **leisure and hospitality** (1,200 jobs) to 428,200. The largest loss during December occurred in **manufacturing** (-1,100 jobs) to 247,400. The second largest loss was **government** (-900 jobs) to 718,600. A third employment loss was **miscellaneous services** (-500 jobs) to 201,700. For total government, a gain occurred in state government (100 jobs) while federal government (-800 jobs) and local government (-200 jobs) lost jobs.

Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted

Industry	Employment			November 2019 to December 2019		December 2018 to December 2019	
	December 2019	November 2019	December 2018	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Total Nonfarm	4,053,800	4,048,600	4,008,600	5,200	0.1%	45,200	1.1%
Total Private Sector	3,335,200	3,329,100	3,284,600	6,100	0.2%	50,600	1.5%
Goods-Producing	454,100	455,000	449,300	-900	-0.2%	4,800	1.1%
Mining	8,200	8,200	7,800	0	0.0%	400	5.1%
Construction	198,500	198,300	197,500	200	0.1%	1,000	0.5%
Manufacturing	247,400	248,500	244,000	-1,100	-0.4%	3,400	1.4%
Service-Providing	3,599,700	3,593,600	3,559,300	6,100	0.2%	40,400	1.1%
Private Service-Providing	2,881,100	2,874,100	2,835,300	7,000	0.2%	45,800	1.6%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	654,800	654,000	658,700	800	0.1%	-3,900	-0.6%
Information	63,200	63,600	64,800	-400	-0.6%	-1,600	-2.5%
Finance	212,500	211,000	205,200	1,500	0.7%	7,300	3.6%
Professional and Business Services	760,500	759,000	750,500	1,500	0.2%	10,000	1.3%
Education and Health Services	560,200	557,300	543,500	2,900	0.5%	16,700	3.1%
Leisure and Hospitality Services	428,200	427,000	410,800	1,200	0.3%	17,400	4.2%
Miscellaneous Services	201,700	202,200	201,800	-500	-0.2%	-100	0.0%
Government	718,600	719,500	724,000	-900	-0.1%	-5,400	-0.7%
Federal Government	179,500	180,300	179,400	-800	-0.4%	100	0.1%
State Government	161,100	161,000	159,700	100	0.1%	1,400	0.9%
Local Government	378,000	378,200	384,900	-200	-0.1%	-6,900	-1.8%

*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

From December 2018 to December 2019, BLS estimates that establishments in Virginia added 45,200 jobs, or 1.1 percent. Over-the-year employment growth in Virginia has been positive for 69 consecutive months and has accelerated slightly in recent months. In December, the private sector recorded an over-the-year gain of 50,600 jobs, while employment in the public sector decreased by 5,400 jobs.

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Compared to a year ago, on a **seasonally adjusted** basis, seven of the eleven major industry divisions experienced employment gains, while four experienced employment losses. The largest over-the-year job gain occurred in **leisure and hospitality**, up 17,400 jobs (+4.2 percent). The next largest over-the-year job gain occurred in **private education and health services**, up 16,700 jobs (+3.1 percent). **Professional and business services** experienced the third largest over-the-year job gain of 10,000 jobs (+1.3 percent). Other gains were in **finance**, up 7,300 jobs (+3.6 percent); **manufacturing**, up 3,400 jobs (+1.4 percent); **construction**, up 1,000 jobs (+0.5 percent); and **mining**, up 400 jobs (+5.1 percent). The largest job loss occurred **government**, down 5,400 jobs (-0.7 percent). The second largest was in **trade and transportation**, down by 3,900 jobs (-0.6 percent). Government saw gains in state government employment (1,400 jobs) and federal government employment (100 jobs) along with a loss in local government employment (-6,900 jobs).

Total Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted

Area	Employment			November 2019 to December 2019		December 2018 to December 2019	
	December 2019	November 2019	December 2018	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Virginia	4,053,800	4,048,600	4,008,600	5,200	0.1%	45,200	1.1%
Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford MSA	77,700	77,600	76,700	100	0.1%	1,000	1.3%
Charlottesville MSA	119,900	119,700	118,200	200	0.2%	1,700	1.4%
Harrisonburg MSA	69,500	69,500	68,500	0	0.0%	1,000	1.5%
Lynchburg MSA	105,300	106,200	105,400	-900	-0.8%	-100	-0.1%
Northern Virginia MSA	1,517,000	1,518,700	1,496,800	-1,700	-0.1%	20,200	1.3%
Richmond MSA	692,900	690,600	680,600	2,300	0.3%	12,300	1.8%
Roanoke MSA	164,500	164,900	161,100	-400	-0.2%	3,400	2.1%
Staunton-Waynesboro MSA	51,900	51,900	51,200	0	0.0%	700	1.4%
Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, Virginia/North Carolina MSA	796,600	794,600	788,200	2,000	0.3%	8,400	1.1%
Winchester, Virginia/West Virginia MSA	66,200	66,200	64,800	0	0.0%	1,400	2.2%

*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

Seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment data is produced for ten metropolitan areas. In December, four metropolitan areas experienced over-the-month job gains, three were unchanged, and three experienced losses. The largest absolute job gain occurred in Richmond (+2,300 jobs). The second largest absolute job gain occurred in Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (+2,000 jobs). The third largest absolute job gain was in Charlottesville (+200 jobs). The largest job loss occurred in Northern Virginia (-1,700 jobs). Others with declines include Lynchburg (-900 jobs); and Roanoke (-400 jobs).

Over the year, **seasonally adjusted** total nonfarm employment increased in nine of the ten metropolitan areas. The Northern Virginia metropolitan area experienced the largest absolute job gain, up 20,200 jobs (+1.3 percent). Richmond ranked second, with a gain of 12,300 jobs (+1.8 percent). Virginia

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Beach-Norfolk-Newport News ranked third, with a gain of 8,400 jobs (+1.1 percent). The other over-the-year job gains occurred in Roanoke (+3,400 jobs); Charlottesville (+1,700 jobs); Winchester (+1,400 jobs); Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford and Harrisonburg (+1,000 jobs each) and Staunton (+700 jobs). The sole job loss occurred in Lynchburg (-100 jobs).

NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA

Virginia's **unadjusted** unemployment rate rose 0.1 percentage point in December to 2.5 percent, but was down 0.1 percentage point from a year ago. Compared to a year ago, the number of unemployed decreased by 3,725, household employment increased by 137,354, and the labor force increased by 133,629. Virginia's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national unadjusted rate, which increased 0.1 percentage point in December to 3.4 percent.

Compared to last month, the December **unadjusted** workweek for Virginia's 169,300 manufacturing production workers increased by 0.3 hour to 40.3 hours, average hourly earnings increased \$0.09 to \$19.48, while average weekly earnings rose \$9.44 to \$785.04. Compared to last December, the unadjusted workweek increased by 0.6 hour, average hourly earnings decreased by \$0.44, and average weekly earnings were lower by \$5.78.

Technical note: Estimates of unemployment and industry employment levels are obtained from two separate monthly surveys. Resident employment and unemployment data are mainly derived from the Virginia portion of the national Current Population Survey (CPS), a household survey conducted each month by the U.S. Census Bureau under contract with BLS, which provides input to the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program (often referred to as the "household" survey). Industry employment data is mainly derived from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey, a monthly survey of approximately 18,000 Virginia businesses conducted by BLS, which provides estimates of employment, hours, and earnings data broken down by industry for the nation as a whole, all states and most major metropolitan areas (often referred to as the "establishment" survey). Both industry and household estimates are revised each month based on additional information from updated survey reports compiled by the BLS.

The statistical reference week for the household survey this month was the week of December 8-14, 2019.

The Virginia Employment Commission plans to release the December local area unemployment rates on Wednesday, February 5, 2020. The data will be available on our website, www.VirginiaWorks.com.

The January statewide unemployment rate and employment data for both the state and metropolitan areas are scheduled to be released on Monday, March 16, 2020.

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